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Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 3 December 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to convey to him the comments of Turkey with regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in view of the forthcoming twentieth anniversary commemoration of its opening for signature (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be distributed as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly under agenda item 25.

(*Signed*) Ümit **Pamir**
Permanent Representative

02-73102 (E) 101202

Annex to the letter dated 3 December 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Turkey has always been supportive of the international efforts to establish a regime of the sea that is based on the principle of equity and that can be acceptable to all States. In this respect, Turkey has followed the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea with close interest and put forward concrete proposals during its deliberations. However, at the end of a long process of discussions, the result achieved, that is to say, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982, was not successful in respect of attaining the balanced and equitable solution Turkey had strived for.

This unsatisfactory result arises from the fact that the Convention does not make adequate reference to exceptional geographical situations, and is not able to establish an acceptable balance between conflicting interests. Furthermore, the Convention makes no provision for registering reservations on specific clauses.

Turkey agrees with the Convention in its general intent and most of its provisions. However, in view of the aforementioned shortcomings, she is unable to become a party to the Convention.

It should be noted that Turkey has been involved in various international negotiation processes and entered into numerous agreements to regulate the regime of seas and different aspects of marine issues both in its region and at the global level. It is the strong belief of Turkey that any outstanding issues between countries should be brought to a peaceful resolution.

As a country that attaches great importance to the maintenance of international peace and stability, Turkey will continue to exert every effort to contribute to the search for peaceful solutions that would respond to the necessities of achieving a balanced and equitable outcome.